

CHESTER TIMES – July 21, 1921 – CHESTER HEIGHTS CAMP MEETING HAS SUCCESSFUL START –  
Fiftieth Anniversary of Founding of Noted Meeting Place Held

The opening of Chester Heights Camp meeting took place last night. Being the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the camp meeting the services were of a special nature.

The service opened with prayer by Rev. Frank M. Gray, followed by an address by John T. Pedlow, president of the Association, in which he gave a history of the founding of the camp and of the selection of Chester Heights. He said that fifty years ago a feeling prevailed among the Philadelphia Methodists that somewhere near that city a suitable location should be secured for the establishing of a camp meeting ground. At a session of the Methodist Preachers' Meeting a movement was started and a committee appointed to secure a suitable grove, and after a thorough investigation the location of Chester Heights, Aston Township, was approved and decided upon by that committee, which was composed of the most prominent clergymen of the Philadelphia Conference among whom were: Revs. S. W. Thomas, J. B. McCullough, Thomas A. Fernley, William Ridgeway, Jacob Dickerson, M. D. Kurtz, J. S. Cook, and from the laymen: R. Scofield, David James, M. D. Lewis Heins, Dr. R. England, George Wanamaker, Jessie Coulston, Thomas Previns, M. Simpson McCullough, Reese Palmer and others. They developed an organization, and soon began the preparations of the ground. All of the founders are now deceased.

Bishop Matthew Simpson, the distinguished Christian orator, manifested a deep interest in the formation and work of the Association which was incorporated as "Thee Philadelphia Camp Meeting and Excursion Association of the Methodist Episcopal Church." The excursion features were designed to provide a place for Churches, Sunday schools and other societies.

As an excursion ground, Chester Heights became very popular and for years entertained many of the Sabbath schools and churches of different denominations. Buildings were erected, and in the summer of 1872, the first camp meeting was conducted. The Philadelphia Conference of the Church officially recognized the Association and the presiding Bishop appointed a committee to take nominal charge of Chester Heights Camp Meeting.

In 1872 a six o'clock evening meeting was held in one of the large church tents which developed into the Young People's Meeting and has been continuously held at the same our through all the succeeding years to the present time. The Rev. Chas. M. Boswell, and Rev. Geo. M. Brodhead, were the spiritual leaders of the Young People's services, and Harvey H. Hubbert was elected president. About this time the children's Meeting was inaugurated under the auspices of Rev. Thomas A. Fernley, who continued in charge of it for a number of years, and it was then known as the Children's Church.

It was some years after the Young People's Meeting was established that the Temple was erected on the hill, and the ministers and laymen with much enthusiasm led on and inspired the young people in the construction of this Mecca of all who have visited Chester Heights. Many young ministers attended the camp meeting and some began their preaching efforts on these grounds, and thus did Chester Heights develop and influence a spiritual and religious zeal among many participants in the meetings, and the attendance at times reached vie thousand worshippers.

Following Mr. Pedlow's talk, the evening was taken up with short courses of instruction by the various workers in which they outlined their programs for the meeting, giving full detail of just what they intended doing and emphasizing the fact that those attending the meeting must aid by their attention and close application .

CAMP CHAT – The Square Club held a very successful Frankfurter Supper on Tuesday evening. Members took turns in the serving as well as in the eating of the Frankies, and in all, about three hundred of the latter perished.

William Merrill has again taken the contract of delivering Chester newspapers to the cottagers and will be glad to know of anyone who desires the papers delivered to their cottage.

Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Schaffer of Media have been at the camp since "Memorial Day," with them are their two daughters, Blanche and Edith.

Carroll Headley, one of the retired members of the camp, is spending a few days at South Westville, New Jersey.

Leonard and Bessie Rider, former campers, were visitors over the weekend.

Mrs. Mary Boyer, who is recovering from a recent attack of appendicitis, has arrived at her cottage.

Mrs. Harry Snyder visited her mother at Spring City on Tuesday.

Last Sunday three of the camp's sturdy young men took a cross country hike in search of blackberries. The trio consisted of Irish Kane, Ike Seeger and the leader, Joseph Rawn.

Hamilton D. Ewell, 2nd, can be observed strolling about the camp with his pipe and overalls.

Many good times are in store for the members of the Square Club.

KEITH LOCKHART COLLECTION